



MANCHURIAN WILD RICE

The threat: Manchurian wild rice threatens native vegetation due to its invasive nature and also blocks drainage channels.

Why is Manchurian wild rice a pest?

Manchurian wild rice (*Zizania latifolia*) is a highly invasive grass that forms dense long-lived stands on land and water margins, and can overrun other riparian species. It was introduced to New Zealand in the early 20th century and resulted in damage to stop banks and drainage channels due to the extensive rhizome (root) system of the plant. The invasive weed also displaces pasture species on low-lying land, reducing land productivity.

It is one of the pests Biosecurity New Zealand, in partnership with regional

councils, is working to eradicate under the National Interest Pests Responses Programme.

What is it?

Manchurian wild rice is a giant perennial grass that grows up to four metres tall. It has long, straight and dull-grey green leaves measuring between 2 and 3cm wide and up to 2.5m long. The leaves have a stout mid-rib tapering to a point and may bend over at the top.

Unlike raupō, which looks similar, it remains green over winter. In addition, raupō has shorter leaves which twist upwards with no midrib. From November to December, manchurian wild rice can

produce a purplish or red-brown flower head (40-60 centimetres long).

Where is it found?

Manchurian wild rice grows alongside rivers, lakes and drains, in swamps and on low-lying farmland. It is found widely in the Kaipara district, especially along the Wairoa River, with a number of scattered populations elsewhere in Northland. Additional sites are found in the Auckland region (South Head and Helensville), the Waikato region (adjacent to the Waihou and Piako Rivers and at Pūriri, near Maungatautiri and Lake Te Kō Utu), and greater Wellington region (near Waikanae).



Heidi Pene and Chris Hale



Greater Wellington Regional Council



Paul Champion

What you should do if you find Manchurian wild rice

You can help us get rid of Manchurian wild rice. If you have seen it or suspect you have seen it in Northland, Waikato, Auckland and Wellington, please contact the respective council:

Northland Regional Council:

0800 002 004

Waikato Regional Council:

0800 800 401

Auckland Council:

09 301 0101
Greater Wellington Regional Council:
0800 496 734

In all other regions contact:

Biosecurity New Zealand's
Exotic Pest and Disease hotline:
0800 80 99 66
www.biosecurity.govt.nz